

MBC President's Convention Address

By Bill Causey, President, 1978-80
Mississippi Baptist Convention

When I was a little boy, a Christian mother and father led me to know Jesus. I've been interpreting that experience ever since. I still don't know all that means . . . I do know more than I did. Every day is a further exegesis of its meaning. Meeting Him as I did in my youth, I now know it had in it the seed of the meaning of all other events that were to follow in my life. I have a growing confidence that its realities will intersect and likewise give meaning to the remainder of my days on this earth.

Don't misunderstand — college and seminary training enhanced it, daily experience confirms it, new insights continually shape it, new dimensions of fellowship with Jesus further endear it, but nothing has diminished its significance. Nor have I ever been impressed that I have been nearer the truth or more nearly approached ultimate reality in terms of the meaning of existence than when I met Him then; or when sometimes He is graciously pleased to let me be touched again.

I regard this as the greatest blessing of my life. What an advantage I have thought it to be! I even have the wild and singleminded notion that it is the one thing that the whole world needs more than it needs anything else. And, by the way, call it simplistic, old-fashioned, narrow-minded, uninformed, uneducated, unsophisticated, not relevant, skirting the issue, boring, not with the times or plain ignorance . . . take your pick, say it, make it stick, fit me into your most caustic category which by comparison makes you feel most sophisticated and bright . . . but I still think it and something in my bones says "Amen." I know you've been there — you know what I mean.

I. It's like a glimpse of glory.

Peter, James and John had been on the Mount of Transfiguration. That experience was destined to color the rest of their lives. The supernatural broke in! Suddenly Jesus was there in His resurrection body. Before their eyes the "metamorphosis" of the natural into the eternal was thrust into their awareness. It was a new and ultimate kind of reality. Their whole world glowed with a new light — a new kind of illumination. Now everything would be suffused by this awareness of "how things could be."

Peter suggested they build three tabernacles. Let's build shrines to these three: Jesus, Moses, and Elijah! After all, they had supernaturally appeared. And Simon Peter was like we are. We like nothing better than to enshrine our remarkable experiences. In fact, we may be better at that than we are anything else. Putting up historical markers says if it never happens again it at least happened here once."

The immediate will of God, however, was not for enshrining their surging religious passions. At least not in the way they thought. God had other plans. The tabernacles would be called Peter, James and John and they would be moveable. They, themselves, would become "temples of the Holy Spirit." Col. 1:29; Phil. 1:6; Gal. 2:20.

The glory cloud of God's Presence covered them all and God said from the cloud "This is my beloved Son, listen to Him." Not you, Simon . . . HIM!

That's strong advice, but that's what we all need. Yet there are so many voices!

Have you noticed? There are always voices, new voices, more voices, wanting us to listen to them! Maybe they think we won't give proper heed to this vision we've all seen



If we don't listen to them.

I hear there are some in Texas who say they believe the Bible more than some others do. Or that we're going to have to let them pick the words we use to say that with. I'm glad somebody is saying they strongly believe the Bible, but now, I don't feel we ought to build a shrine out of their words, or mine, or yours! The admonition is "Listen to HIM!" And He said, "heaven and earth . . ."

I observed a recent tendency for some to want to organize us all into a political force so we can give properly

structured national expression to some moral values they'd like us to build a shrine to. I'm sure they want to be sure that we don't forget the vision we've all seen. It requires our good citizenship. But, to enshrine even our best intentions in a political structure is one sure way to leave behind fossilized religious convictions when the Master moves on. I think we better "LISTEN TO HIM." My Kingdom is not of this world . . ."

I even heard it rumored that some said they had a scheme to put "their kind" in charge of all our institutions and control them, so our institutions can enshrine the way they see it. Seeing as how God has already saved most of these institutions from some frail humans more than once anyhow, it doesn't appeal to me much to think I should breathe easier now that they've arrived to save us all. The real pull to me is to "LISTEN TO HIM"!

II. When they did listen in the story of the transfiguration, He brought them down to the valley. They were needed there.

(After all, who can bring the glory down into the valley except those who have seen it on the mountain?)

Down there a helpless man was seeking wholeness as a father by helping his son; a son utterly unable to help himself — and worst of all; sincere, earnest disciples were trying to help but without power. What a picture of us, much of the time!

The world intuitively knows that the answer is somewhere near Jesus. The world foams and struggles and falls into the fire and water, crying to us disciples for help.

Those disciples found out that saying the right words, and caring desperately, and feeling deeply, even doing it

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Let's Go To The Mountain

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Blue Mountain Group Sings

Nancy Ellis Robertson leads the Blue Mountain College Singers in a performance during the 1980 session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. More pictures will be in next week's issue.

Brotherhood Trustees Affirm Doctrinal Integrity Resolution

OLIVE BRANCH, Miss. (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission affirmed a denominational resolution on doctrinal integrity, agreed to cooperate with a concerned layman organizing body and elected new officers at a three-day meeting in Holiday Inn Conference Center, Olive Branch, Miss.

The resolution on doctrinal integrity, adopted on the final day of the 1980 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in St. Louis, exhorted trustees to "carefully preserve the doctrinal integrity" of the institution and employ a professional staff who believe in the "divine inspiration of the whole Bible, the infallibility of the original manus-

cripts and that the Bible is truth without any error."

Executive Director James H. Smith said he will follow up by consulting personally with each professional staff member concerning his or her beliefs in the Scriptures.

The action to participate with a concerned layman's group within the framework of the agency received the most discussion. Trustees asked their chairman to name seven commissioners to work with the concerned laymen and to make a report at the next meeting in April.

In action a week earlier in Memphis, 101 laymen and pastors voted to organize a fellowship of Baptist men, in-

Record Attendance

State Convention Elects Wester, Votes Clarke Merger

By Tim Nicholas

The most messengers ever to attend a Mississippi Baptist Convention voted to merge Clarke College with Mississippi College, elected Brooks Wester as president on the first ballot, adopted a \$12.6 million 1981 Cooperative Program budget, and passed resolutions that included expression of concern over public school texts' "closed interpretation of origins."

The Clarke merger, proposed by the

Clarke trustees with the endorsement of the MBC Education Commission and the state Convention Board, was approved after a substitute motion was defeated which would have left the Baptist junior college at Newton in the hands of the trustees and required movement toward senior college status. (Separate story on page 3)

In other business, the record 1,442 messengers elected Wester, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, as president, defeating two other nominees on the first ballot. The two were Howard Aultman, evangelist from Columbia; and Bill Webb, pastor of Midway Baptist Church, Meridian.

Other officers were elected unopposed. They are David Pratt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Winona, first vice president; Ed McDaniel, pastor of First Baptist Church, Durant, second vice president; Carey Cox, retired director of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, recording secretary; and Paul Harwood, pastor of College Hill Heights Baptist Church, Oxford, reelected as assistant recording secretary.

Causey's Successor

Wester, succeeding Bill Causey, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church of Jackson who served two one-year terms, is a graduate of Baylor University who earned a master of theology degree from Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex. He has served as head of the SBC Executive Committee, and as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He and his wife Margaret have two children.

The budget recommendation, coming from the Convention Board, received a motion for amendment from Jerry Guess, Self Creek, Okoboji Association. Guess moved to change

an item which called for the first \$250,000 received after the \$12,655,000 budget was reached to go to the Mississippi College School of Law. Guess wanted only the first \$100,000 to go to the School of Law, the next \$150,000 to be divided among the other schools. That amendment failed and the budget was adopted as presented on page 2 of this issue.

Seven Resolutions

The seven resolutions included one expressing concern over "continued promulgation through the public schools of a closed interpretation of origins" and asking the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission to "confer with representatives of the major publishing companies and work toward a greater openness in the interpretation of origins as taught through our public schools."

That resolution presented by the resolutions committee was different from the one passed and offered to the convention by the Yalobusha Association. The original asked for a committee to study the public schoolbook situation "giving special attention to the theory of evolution, the Bible as the Word of God by divine inspiration, and the concept of God being taught."

Guy Reedy, pastor of First Baptist Church, Water Valley, who wrote the original resolution, said his association was "not after any particular book." He said the resolution was the result of parents' general complaints that school books present Darwin's theory of evolution as fact rather than as theory. "It is not particularly a problem in our area, but for years we've been hearing this type of thing," he said.

Two other resolutions decried continued attempts at government en-

croachment in church affairs and asked messengers to contact the legislature to insist on legislation to overseas charitable workers from the Foreign Earned Income Act of 1976. Without that exclusion, Southern Baptist foreign missionaries will be required to pay up to an additional \$1 million in taxes this year.

A resolution on alcohol reaffirmed Mississippi Baptists' opposition to use of alcohol as a beverage and continued opposition to advertising of alcoholic beverages in the state. Also, it called for passage of a reduction of the blood alcohol content from the present .15 percent to .10 percent for the purpose of declaring one to be legally intoxicated.

Other resolutions paid tribute to Mrs. Nannie Pitts McLemore, who died Jan. 24, 1980, and to John F. Carter, who died July 27, 1980. A final resolution expressed appreciation for First Baptist Church, Jackson, and all the people who made the convention possible.

Constitutional Matters

Several constitutional matters were voted on. One amendment, read last year, was passed this year. It involved allowing the Christian Action Commission to make reports and recommendations to either the convention or the convention board.

Other amendments were introduced this year for voting in 1981. One would keep the size of the convention board at 100 despite any associational mergers, and would require board members to remain in the county of residence where they were elected rather than simply in the association.

Earl Kelly, convention board executive secretary-treasurer, moved that

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Week of Prayer: Nov. 30-Dec. 7

Prayer Could Revolutionize Foreign Missions/World

observance of the 1980 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. The week will culminate in the ingathering of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention, has set a \$45 million national goal for the foreign missions offering.

The theme for the Week of Prayer is "My World, My Life, My Witness." It is based on 1 John 4:14 which stresses that God answers prayer.

Plans for the week-long observance call for churches to involve the entire membership in prayer and other activities, such as displays, missions banquets, and special missions messages.

The purpose of the Week of Prayer and the Lottie Moon Offering is to undergird Southern Baptist foreign missions with prayer and financial support.

"I'm convinced that if Southern Baptists were really mobilized in a significant prayer ministry, it would revolutionize the world," says R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission

Board. "Prayer would be one of the elements that would enable us to communicate the gospel to the whole world."

"Pray that the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal will be reached," says Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union. "Also pray that at every level at which funds are allocated to the Cooperative Program, beginning with the individual pocketbook, that foreign missions will be magnified."

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is the single largest source of financial support for more than 3,000 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 94 countries. It provides approximately half of the Foreign Mission Board's annual budget. Because the Cooperative Program funds administrative costs, all of the offering is spent on overseas missions causes. None of it is used for home operating expenses.

The offering, which dates back to 1888, had its beginnings when pioneer China missionary Lottie Moon urged Southern Baptist women to set aside a

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Drys Challenge Vote Legality In Jeff Davis

Dry forces in Jefferson Davis County have challenged the legality of a liquor election in that county held in connection with the general election Nov. 4. The wets won the election by 142 votes, but dry forces see possible evidence that there were not enough signatures on petitions to call for a liquor referendum in the previously dry county.

Gary L. Pinkley, pastor of the Old Hebron Baptist Church in Jefferson Davis County, said a careful count of the signatures revealed only 1,430

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New Convention Officers

The newly elected Mississippi Baptist Convention officers (left to right) are Brooks Wester, pastor, First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, president; David Pratt, pastor, First Baptist Church, Winona, first vice president; Ed McDaniel, pastor, First Baptist Church, Durant, second vice president; Carey Cox, retired director, Mississippi Baptist Foundation, recording secretary; and Paul Harwood, pastor, College Hill Heights Baptist Church, Oxford, assistant recording secretary.

To The Mountain

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like you've done it before doesn't always mean success. That's what I have found out too! And in their efforts they sent out mixed, confusing signals. They gave the impression they had no answer. Surely the spawning of side issues, and power struggles, and maneuvering for denominational machinery must confuse the very testimony we hope to bear. We give out mixed signals too.

How will a denomination grow which talks about Bold Mission Thrust but can't thrust itself boldly into anything because of side issues?

Or how will missions be very bold when 50% of our church members never give anything to support God's work at all, and inflation in foreign countries is destroying the increased giving of the faithful?

Or, who's going to be saved in a town where the local pastor and church staff are treated worse by the Christian power structure in the church than the town treats the local tavern operator or the community prostitute outside the church?

These are mighty confusing signals.

Remember, our central task is to take the glory from the mountain to the need of the world. That's Missions and Evangelism! This mission is the only thing that ever formed Baptists into associations and state conventions to start with. It's the only thing that will keep us together, nurture our efforts, bless and heal the world and bring glory to God.

We need not confusion but KOINONIA. Not argument but Agape.

My children and I saw a snake strike and kill himself one day. He had carried in his own head all his life the poison that would mean his death. He had carried it safely before, but now it killed him. Perhaps we carry very near our hearts, the very thing which could also destroy us! And that is: we are free to attack ourselves . . . to develop side preoccupations . . .

III. Here's the problem as in the story — the man brought his son to Jesus — But he couldn't get past the disciples.

That we should get in the way of the very kingdom enterprise we wish to promote is unthinkable. But it is a conspicuously observable possibility.

Some think we can brutally attack each other without shaking the foundations. We watched play by play while the Nixon presidency was taken apart piece by piece. Popular support was certainly there at election time. Nobody thought the highest officer in the earth's strongest nation would be destroyed — only chastized a bit. But the government fell. Attacking each other can be legal but also lethal.

Why should the world have to push disciples aside anyway to get to the Healer of its problems? The helpers of the Healer become hindrances to the Healer.

We watched while a man we never heard of in a town we never heard of brought America's might to a standstill and held us all hostage along with 52 of our country men. The foundations are being shaken.

Surely there exists in the fellowship of our body-life the right to call on our agencies and institutions to correct themselves. We have every right to expect our leaders and trustees to deal with deviations from Baptist belief and polity. A leader turns trust to tragedy, however, when he no longer sees himself a steward of an entrusted asset reflecting the corporate concern of a whole denomination intent on carrying out its missionary purpose. But we owe them our continued support and trust: assist in finding new directions without shaking the foundations.

It has been enough time to signal every Baptist that a grass root element in our churches is deeply serious about doing God's work. They see it in terms of leading others to Jesus — missions and evangelism — and rightly so. All the religious double talk in the world is not going to change that. They ought not to have to push past some of the disciples to do that.

A lot of our new leaders are listening. It doesn't make them feel insecure. It hasn't shocked them or frightened them. They are hearing the heartcry of Southern Baptists. Southern Baptists are saying: somehow mobilize us and guide us. Show us how to get this deeply troubled world to Jesus. There is an enormous pent up zeal that must not be frustrated. We want the world as a trophy to lay at His feet. We have seen on the mountain what He can do.

This can be carried right down to the local churches. If someone walked up on your church yard and wanted to meet Jesus what would happen? Would they be shown to the pastor, to a deacon, or godly teacher? That was not the request. How do we get past the smoke screen of "religious" things to Jesus? Revelation 3:20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," is not just a verse for leading children to Jesus. It is the sad picture of JESUS unable to get in a church!

IV. The Man in the story finally got to Jesus with his son. The child's symptoms became more pronounced when he finally was in Jesus' presence. The world's problems are more obvious too in His presence. Maybe that's why

Christians have always seen the world's needs more glaringly than anyone else. Not to say that social commentators don't see enough. They do. But this would bring conviction!

In the same way time became more pronounced. "How long has it been this way?" Jesus asked. From childhood. So with the world. The problem from the beginning has been this way. Apart from God, time as our experience of history has no real significance.

Perhaps no wiser thing is said in scripture by one who is not already a believer than the reply the man made, "I do believe, help my unbelief." I do believe — that's why I cry to God — but my spirit keeps getting caught in my limitations and finitude. I find myself fighting the battle of unsmiling my unbelief all the time — help me! Jesus, deliver me into the world of infinite possibility where You live."

Here's the aspect of doing God's work that nearly blows my mind. We say the answer is with God — but the applauding we do is for the person who succeeds using the world's methods; and we measure it the same way the world does. A peculiar inconsistency sets in — a kind of ambivalence — we believe (but a lot of unbelief persists). We depend on Jesus — (no doubt about that) but only do we believe He did something if management techniques and money don't explain it. What kind of a pastor do committees look for? One who can get the job done — a go getter — one who can demonstrate through his performance a measurable success in terms Wall Street understands better than we do. We applaud the unbelief and keep on talking about belief.

But here is the other side to the story. Here is the valley full of bones. Can that which is dead live again? Ezekiel's reply was that God alone knew the answer. Then there was the next promising episode. Not bones. But bones with sinew and flesh and skin. This army looks like it could speak to you — fight for you. But you can scream at it, push it, call in a consultant and reorganize it, even call in a new boss (fire Ezekiel) but, until God breathes into it, all you've got is a dead army. And that's true of a mission enterprise, a denomination, a local church.

Now that reminds me of what is up on the mountain. If we could only get that breath of God — that glory — the transforming, illuminating, supernatural power of God — to quicken this army; to energize it, to engender life and spontaneity! Everything within me says, knows, believes, announces, declares that soon a messenger would come rushing in with the news that the desert is blooming; showers of blessing are falling on the churches; the sheep are bearing lambs and there is a rumor about that some have seen the Shepherd. The earth has been healed of its great sickness. The convulsions have stopped. It no longer falls in the fire and water and hearts are glad and no one's heart rejoices more than the Father's.

I once saw a Japanese boy come to know Jesus as we read the Bible together. We were reading John 3 where Nicodemus was having his interview with Jesus. Having finished I asked him "Shigeo, would you like the Spirit of Jesus to come into your spirit?" He replied, "He already did." When I asked "when did this happen" he said, "while you were reading."

He later stood in my office to tell me goodbye. He was going home to Japan. He said, "I came to this country to get a master's degree. I won't get that because my English was not good enough . . . BUT I GOT SOMETHING A LOT BETTER . . . JESUS!"

In a God-given glimpse he had been to the mountain and back; he had seen a glory that was never to leave him. Come, stand with me one more time on the mountain, stand in the glow of the gloryworld that is coming where not only Elijah and Moses and Jesus live but all the sainted dead.

Look down in the valley at the world. Marching armies with armor rumbling anxious parliaments debating and forces of evil, grotesque, Satanic, rolling in like fog the whole earth convulsing and falling into the fire and water.

What does your heart say? Shall we stay here and comfortably build tabernacles? Do we rush down there to put out a world conflagration with a thimble full of water?

OR DO WE

Open the floodgates of Heaven and let "justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an overflowing stream." (Amos 5:24)

AND

Let the whole world know — IN OUR GENERATION — that Jesus Christ is Lord — to the glory of God the Father! And do it with a bold thrust!

But how can we do it, Lord?

"If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked way; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chron. 7:14

Supreme Court Action Leaves Christmas Programs In Place

WASHINGTON (BP) — Public schools may continue to observe religious holidays, including Christmas, after the Supreme Court declined to review whether the practice violates the Constitution.

By refusing to review the complaint of a group of Sioux Falls, S.D., parents, the high court cut to rest a controversial

toward religion prescribed by the Constitution. "It was never the purpose or intent of the school district to authorize or promote a program with religious effect," the board argued in a written legal brief.

Further, to eliminate observance of all holidays with religious content

Justices William J. Brennan Jr. and Thurgood Marshall dissented from the action, indicating they voted to review the case. Four justices must agree, however, before the full court takes a case for argument and decision.

WMU Booklet



Missionary Reception

Home and foreign missionaries were honored during the Mississippi Baptist Convention with a reception after the Tuesday evening service.

Trustees, Board Members Elected During Convention

The report of the Committee on Nominations is presented below. The names listed in bold face in each category are those voted on and elected at the convention. The asterisks denote at large members.

CONVENTION BOARD MEMBERS

Term Expires 1981

Hinds-Madison, James Webster, Jackson; Humphreys, W. C. Spears, Isola; Leake, Curtis James, Carthage; Lee, Richard Clements, Tupelo; Pike, Ray Pridgen, McComb; Smith, James T. Bryant, Taylorsville; Union County, Jim Bain, New Albany.

Term Expires 1982

Attala, L. Edward Gandy, Kosciusko; Lamar, James Yates, Hattiesburg; Lawrence, Mike Mitchell, Jayess.

Term Expires 1983

Acorn, Charles Dill, Corinth; Copiah, Robert Hanvey, Hazlehurst; Lauderdale, Ronnie Massey, Meridian; Lebanon, Powell Ogletree, Hattiesburg; Marshall, Clarence Walker, Red Banks; Newton, W. L. Compre, Newton; Okfobeha, Marvin Bonds, Starkville; Okfobeha, Jimmy Vance, Starkville; Rankin, Howard Benton, Pearl; Rankin, Mrs. Jean Benton, Brandon; Riverside, Wayne Griffith, Lyon; Tippah, James A. Lewis, Blue Mountain; Yalobusha, Buford Sellers, Oakland.

BOARD OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

Term Expires 1981

Charles Martin, Clinton; Douglas C. Bain, Jr., Blue Mountain; James McLemore, Hattiesburg.

Term Expires 1982

J. B. Costilow, Newton; Guy Culver, Corinth; Gus Merritt, Decatur.

Term Expires 1983

W. P. Bobo, Jackson; Jerry Oswalt, Hattiesburg; Robert Wall, Clinton.

CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION

Term Expires 1981: Graham Hales, Hattiesburg; Julius Thompson, Jackson; W. W. Walley, Waynesboro; George Lee, Columbia; James Travis, Jackson.

Term Expires 1982

Ervin Brown, Hernando; Mrs. James O. Allen, Columbus; Charles Myers, Jackson; Mrs. Glen Pearson, Hattiesburg; Gerald Keys, Brookhaven.

Term Expires 1983

John Claypool, Jackson; Sue Tatum, Yazoo City; Richard Myers, Cleveland; Bob Perry, Moss Point; M. L. Graham, Foxworth.

EDUCATION COMMISSION

Term Expires 1981: Robert Upchurch, Tupelo; Joe Tuton, Jackson; A. J. Comfort, Brandon; H. T. Hudleston, McComb.

Term Expires 1982

Hines Cronin, Moss Point; James Heflin, Greenville; Gene Henderson, Columbus; Fred Fowler, Jackson.

Term Expires 1983

Leon Young, Meridian; Thomas Watts, Columbia; Billy Thamis, Wesson; James E. Scirratt, Jackson.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Term Expires 1981: Mrs. L. L. Hood, Shannon; Billy Williams, Gautier; Roy Hawkins, Columbus.

Term Expires 1982

Larry Thornton, Natchez.

Term Expires 1983

Ed McMillian, Clinton; W. D. McCain, Hattiesburg; Robert Agnew, Macon.

BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

Term Expires 1981: Bruce Aultman, Hattiesburg; Bob Eustice, Biloxi; Mrs. Owen Cooper, Yazoo City; Jim Keith, Gulfport; Wiley Fairchild, Hattiesburg.

Term Expires 1982

James Hester, Laurel; John E. Barnes, Hattiesburg; Eugene Dobbs, Philadelphia; Gerald Franklin, Natchez; Mrs. Gandy, Biloxi.

Term Expires 1983

James Hester, Laurel; John E. Barnes, Hattiesburg; Eugene Dobbs, Philadelphia; Gerald Franklin, Natchez; Mrs. Gandy, Biloxi.

Prayer Could

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week in December for prayer and self-denial for foreign missions. Miss Moon died of starvation on December 24, 1913. Following her death, WMU women chose to honor the concept of sacrificial giving by naming the offering after her.

Since the 1888 offering, more than \$46,000,000 has been given through the offering to foreign missions. (WMU)

Convention

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the board be allowed to delete from the convention annual the names and address of church staffers on the alternate years when they are printed in the SBC annual.

Later in the convention proceedings, Oliver Ladner, Magee, explained that the deletion vote did not make a necessary change in the constitution which requires yearly listings of church staffers. He moved that such a change be made for voting next year. That motion carried.

Kelly also proposed that the 1980 MBC annual be dedicated to the memory of Joe T. Odle who died last March.

In the report of the convention board was a motion to begin a cooperative mission agreement with the Southern Baptist General Convention of California.

The convention voted to begin the 1981 Mississippi Baptist Convention earlier in the week. Messengers carried the recommendation of the Time, Place and Preacher Committee, which asked for the convention to begin in 1981 on Monday afternoon, Nov. 9, and to run through Wednesday noon, Nov. 11. This move shortens the convention by one session and allows messengers time to return to home churches for Wednesday evening services.

Messengers voted to return to Jackson's First Baptist Church and to ask James Yates, pastor of First Baptist Church, Yazoo City, to preach the 1981 convention sermon, with Larry Kennedy, pastor of First Baptist Church, Laurel, as alternate.

Brotherhood

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market vice president, recording secretary; and Smith, treasurer.

Joining the officers on the agency's executive committee were Louis Clapper of Washington, D.C.; Wendell Crews of Athens, Tenn.; L. W. Brasington of Columbia, S.C.; Don Donaldson of Oklahoma City; and Everett Lemay of Albion, Ill.

In other action, the trustees approved a recommendation of a 75th anniversary committee to use a 16-month celebration in 1982-83 to focus attention on past values and future potential of Royal Ambassadors and Baptist Men.

During the celebration beginning at the annual meeting of the SBC in June 1982, the agency will seek to lead 750,000 men and boys to commemorate the founding of men and boys' work.

The trustees also shelved an inquiry to change the name of the agency after a survey of trustees, state Brotherhood leaders and staff failed to support it. The survey was made after a suggestion a year ago to consider changing the name.

A request to the SBC Executive Committee for \$762,000 in Cooperative Program operating funds for 1982-83 was affirmed. The request, up \$102,000 or 15 percent from the 1980-81 allocations, indicated the increase would be used to combat inflation, to support concerned laymen's projects, and to increase enrollment of men and boys in missions.

The request must be approved by the SBC Executive Committee in February and in June at the annual meeting of the SBC before the increase can be granted.

Next meeting of the trustees is April 23-25, 1981, in Memphis.

Clarke Merger Approved After Hour-Long Debate

By Tim Nicholas

No rubber stamps were used in discussion and final adoption of a proposal to merge Clarke College with Mississippi College during business sessions of the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting at Jackson's First Baptist Church last week.

The merger was proposed by Clarke College trustees as a solution to financial and enrollment problems at the Newton-based junior college. Only 201 students were enrolled for fall term and trustees noted that operating funds were depleted.

The sometimes-emotional debate began during the Wednesday morning session and was interrupted so that speaker Keith Parks, head of the Foreign Mission Board, could preach that morning.

It continued at 3:15 that afternoon; total time being more than one hour of discussion. The debate included introduction of a substitute motion by Jimmy Walker, pastor of Springdale Baptist Church, Ripley.

Walker's motion read: "That we instruct the Clarke College Trustees to continue to operate Clarke College for at least five years. That we fund the Clarke College program to gradually phase in the 3rd and 4th year program beginnings with the academic year of 1981-82. That the Trustees be given permission to offer as collateral or sale approximately 120 acres of land adjacent to the campus across U.S. Highway 80 from the campus."

Walker said that on two earlier occasions Clarke had been denied in attempts to reach out into the market for students. Edward Farr, Scooba, said, "We have a sick college and you want to abandon it."

Billy Thamas, chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission, said the original motion was not killing the institution and that the substitute motion "might be a real financial burden to the convention."

John Brock, a member of the Clarke trustee board, explained the trustees' position. "We do not want to close the school. We would rather not merge with Mississippi College. This was to us the only option we had other than to close the school."

Brock compared the cost per student to Mississippi's Cooperative Program at Clarke to the other three Baptist operated schools. The amount given to Clarke was \$1,770 per student last year. At Blue Mountain College it was \$1,016 per student; Mississippi College was \$416; and William Carey College was \$411.

Brock noted that a junior college

must have good accreditation records to move to upper division status, which Clarke does not have and which MC does. And he said the 120 acres would only bring \$1,000 per acre.

"If you give this back to us," said Brock, "there is need immediately for improvements and changes," at an amount he estimated at a minimum of \$3 million. That would allow the beginning of a junior and senior program. "The second alternative—it's reality," said Brock, "we believe if you give it back to us—on the basis of what we're operating now—would give the great possibility the school would be closed."

After Brock spoke, Jerry Johnson, Yazoo County, said he had been planning to speak against the original motion, but he said that what Brock said was the information he said he'd been trying to get for a long time. "One of the problems is unavailability of information," he said. He added, "I feel whatever we do, we ought to do it prayerfully."

Hugh Poole, a former trustee of Clarke, said he believed the merger would not "keep the uniqueness of Clarke as it is now." Poole recalled earlier feasibility studies to upgrade Clarke which were never brought before the convention.

Then Kermit McGregor, Clinton, former chairman of the education commission, said, "the college cannot, regardless of my own or your emotional feeling, continue as it is." He added that as the people vote, "it should not be a test of fellowship."

The last speaker concerning the Clarke proposals was Lowrey Compere, past president of Clarke. He pointed out that of 21 Baptist junior colleges that existed 25 years ago, only two have closed—12 have become senior colleges, he said. He said that in 1974, in the face of potential opposition to a trustee-proposed feasibility study for Clarke's advancement to senior college status, he chose not to present it to the convention.

Then a motion to take a ballot vote failed and President Bill Causey asked for a voice vote on the substitute motion. The substitute failed. Then by voice vote again, the original motion to merge Clarke with Mississippi College passed.

In a press conference after the vote, MC President Lewis Nobles said the MC trustees would likely vote on acceptance of the merger proposal in January. However, he noted that the trustees had already indicated they would "look with favor" on the proposal.

Both Nobles and A. C. Johnson, president of Clarke, said that classes are scheduled to continue as usual this spring semester and next fall with addition of upper courses "based on expressed interest," said Nobles.



Jimmy Walker presented a substitute motion to the Clarke proposal. Other speakers on the issue are pictured below.



John Brock



Hugh Poole



Lowrey Compere

Drys Challenge

(Continued from page 1) names whereas the referendum required 1,500. In addition to that, he said, it is evident that some people signed for themselves and others, which is contrary to the law. The petitioners had claimed 1,559 names.

The Jefferson Davis Christian Action Committee was formed to seek to counter the efforts of the wet forces. This committee was granted a hearing on the matter set for Nov. 11. It was continued until Nov. 21 at 9 a.m.

Pinkley is finance committee chairman for the committee, and he notes that the process is beginning to be expensive. The committee is having to pay all court costs as well as their attorney's fees. He said that the committee would appreciate the prayers of Mississippi Baptists as the matter is being decided this week.

Pinkley said there was little time to prepare for the election in that the county received the petitions calling for the referendum on the first Monday in October and set it up for Nov. 4. The first public notice was three weeks before the election, and the committee had to get organized and functioning in that period of time.

If the dry claim is upheld in the court proceedings, he said, the referendum will be voided, leaving the county dry.

—Bob Shirley, Tupelo—



International Student Meet Shows Christianity

By Lloyd Lanceford

Department of Student Work

"As everybody knows, I am from Iran, a country that doesn't have good relationship with this country. Then, maybe everybody ask, what I am doing here. But last year I was here and I understand this place is the place for God and friendship between all countries. And, this is not the place for political. Then I feel (friendship) for everybody, especially for my American friends. Thank you for giving me happiness and accepting me in this place."

This was one of many testimonies shared by students from thirty-one different countries of our world during the 1980 Mississippi International Student Conference held at Camp Garaywa, Nov. 7-9.

During the weekend, international students were given the opportunity to make friends and establish community through "Community Building Groups" consisting of 8-10 Internationals, an American student and a BSU Director. Students grew in their understanding of the different cultures, customs, and family structures that are a part of life around the world.

Featured speaker for the conference was M. Thomas Starkes, associate professor of missions and world religions at the New Orleans Seminary. In his message entitled, "Science, Religion, and the Recovery of Joy," Starkes told the students that people must stop killing each other and come to realize the necessity of cooperation if we are to make our world a better place to live. In another message, "What Difference Does Christ Make?" he expressed a hope that the internationals would find that faith in Jesus Christ that brings happiness and security in the arms of the heavenly Father.

A highlight of the conference was the International Parade of Talent on Saturday evening. Dressed in native costumes, students from Indonesia, Taiwan, Venezuela, India, Liberia,

Rural-Urban, Changing Churches Conference Subject

A regional conference for pastors, directors of missions, and key church leaders of churches in changing communities and rural/urban churches will be held Nov. 24-25 at Temple Heights Church, Oxford.

Program personalities will include Quentin Lockwood, director of the Rural-Urban Department of the Home Mission Board, SBC, Atlanta; Willis Bennett, professor of church and community, and director of graduate studies, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Ray Grissett and Hollis Bryant, consultants with the Cooperative Missions department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and Arthur Leslie, host director of missions.

Woodville Opens Mission Point

Woodville Church has begun a mission at Fort Adams. In addition to those present from Woodville for the first service on Nov. 2, there were 25 from Fort Adams.

Fort Adams is a resort area, but some people live there full-time, in addition to others who come in for the weekends.

Bob Rogers, minister of music and youth at Woodville, will be doing the preaching, according to a report from the Mississippi Association director of missions, John Paul Jones.

Woodville Church bought a building, moved it to the site, and renovated it for use by the mission.

Ben Carlisle is pastor at Woodville. Mrs. Vera Strickland, the associational WMU director and member of Woodville Church, lives in Fort Adams. The mission point need surfaced because of her interest in her home area.

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 3
Thursday, November 20, 1980

Goodman Road Becomes Lake Forest Chapel

Goodman Road Baptist Church, DeSoto County, has voted to dissolve and to become a mission of the LaBelle Haven Church, Memphis. It will be called the Lake Forest Baptist Chapel and will use the property of the former Goodman Road Church.

It will still be a part of the Northwest Association in Mississippi. Don Minshew is the new pastor of the chapel.

Baptist Memorial Agrees To Lease Arkansas Hospital

The Board of Trustees of Baptist Memorial Hospital (Memphis), has reached agreement with the Board of Trustees of Corning Community Hospital (Arkansas) to negotiate a long term lease arrangement of the 40 bed hospital.

Buel Smith, chairman of the board at Corning Community Hospital, indicated that the board's decision to affiliate with Baptist Memorial Hospital was a major step toward guaranteeing the quality, stability and survival of the hospital.

Recently the board of Baptist Memorial Hospital has approved affiliation arrangements with Lauderdale County Hospital in Ripley, Tennessee; Tipton County Memorial Hospital in Convington, Tennessee; and the Trezevant Manor Allen Morgan Nursing Home in Memphis, Tennessee.

The Memphis hospital is jointly operated by the Baptist conventions of Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas.



Pat Johnston, student at Mississippi University for Women, and Telesia Fidow, also at MUW, sing a duet during the international student conference. Johnston is the daughter of missionaries in Nigeria. Fidow is a native of Samoa.



Tim Glaze (extreme left) leads a "family group" session during conference.

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BR2

The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Editorials

The Lord's work . . .

Our most important consideration

The past week was as fine an hour as Mississippi Baptists have experienced. It was the week of the annual Mississippi Baptist Convention. It was a historic week because it was one during which a decision was made that will have to rank as one of the most important of the convention's history. As all are aware by this time, no doubt, the decision was to accept the recommendation of the Clarke College Board of Trustees that the college be allowed to work out a merger arrangement with Mississippi College. Such far-reaching decisions as this regarding a Baptist institution are not made lightly.

The convention was fine for a number of reasons, but one of the most important was that this issue had adequate and reasonable discussion by those who held varying positions, the vote was taken by voice indication, and everyone accepted the decision that was made.

President Bill Causey made every effort to maintain a balance in the discussion. John Brock, vice-chairman of the Clarke trustees, was one of several to speak in favor of the merger. Hugh Poole, a former trustee, spoke in opposition to the merger; and Jimmy Walker, pastor of Springdale Baptist Church, Ripley, presented a substitute motion concerning continued operation of Clarke College as a separate institution, gradually phasing in third and fourth years. This substitute eventually failed by voice vote.

W. Lowrey Compere, former presi-

dent of Clarke, said the school's Kades-Barnea came in 1974 when a trustee proposal that a feasibility study be made for a four-year college was not pursued.

All of this is to say that there was more than passing interest at the convention faced the decision, and there was more than a little discussion. The high registration figure of 1,442 may have been due in part to the fact that the Clarke decision was to be made.

It was made with deliberation and with dignity. Not all agreed, but all accepted the decision. It was indeed a fine hour for Mississippi Baptists both from the standpoint of the fact that such a momentous decision was faced and made and also from the standpoint of the fact that it was determined after ample and reasonable discussion.

The convention was a fine hour for Mississippi Baptists also because of the inspiration that was to be found during its sessions. The Baptist Record cannot print all of the speeches, of course; but they all certainly were worth recording. Historically, we print the president's address and the annual convention sermon. Those addresses by Bill Causey and Frank Gumm, respectively, were among the many fine ones and appear in this and the next issue. The heads of three of the four boards of the Southern Baptist Convention were speakers. They were Keith Parks of the Foreign Mission Board; Darold Morgan of the Annuity Board; and Grady Cothen, a native of Mississippi, of the Sunday School

Board. Another Mississippi native, Morris Chapman, now pastor of First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls, delivered the closing address.

There were seven Bible Treasure speakers, all Mississippians. All were inspirational. The most memorable witnessing experiences also were high lights. Ed Willis, a Sunday School teacher, said his last most memorable one was last Sunday. His next more memorable one will be next Sunday.

Music at Mississippi Baptist conventions is always inspiring, and this year was no exception.

Through resolutions Mississippi Baptists took responsible positions on an earned income exclusion for missionaries serving overseas, on government entanglements and religious liberty, on blood alcohol content for presumed drunkenness, and on the content of public school books concerning the origin of the earth and life.

A bold, challenging budget for 1981 of \$12,655,000 was adopted. In 1977, when Bold Mission Thrust first got under way, the financial goal was established of doubling Cooperative Program gifts by 1983 and doubling them again by 2,000. The 1977 Mississippi Baptist Cooperative Program budget was \$8.4 million, and gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention were \$2,688,000. The 1981 gifts to SBC causes will be \$4,239,425. So while the state budget might not quite reach the double figure by 1982, the portion going outside the state will be very close due to the program of increasing the SBC

portion by one-half of one per cent each year.

Significantly, the 1980 annual will be dedicated to Joe T. Odle, the former editor of the Baptist Record, who died in March. This was decided by convention action.

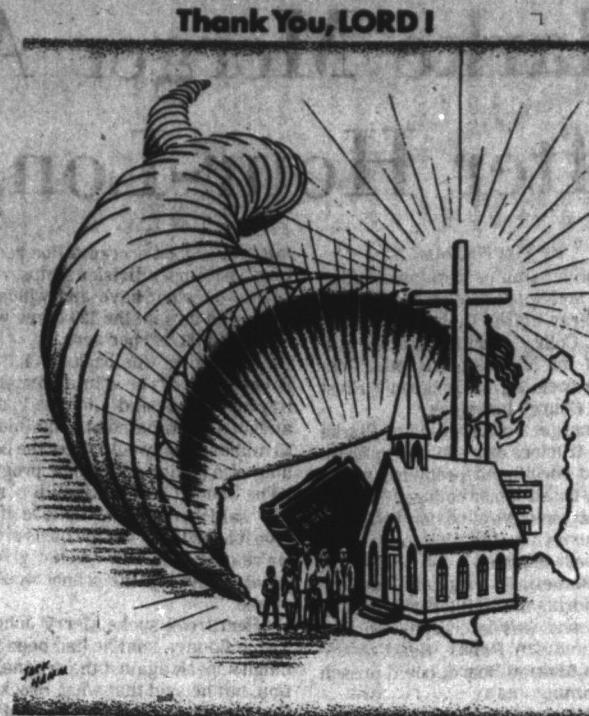
It was a good convention. This was the sentiment in conversations between sessions and at the conclusion. Not the least factor in making it so was the president, Bill Causey. His interest in it being a worthwhile experience was apparent, and his attitude was contagious.

The Committee on Order of Business, with Louis Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church, Canton, as chairman, is due the commendation of Mississippi Baptists for an excellent program.

The new president is Brooks Wester, the pastor of First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, who has just finished a year as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. His interest in world-wide ministry is apparent in that he was chairman of the SBC Executive Committee for two years until June of this year.

This convention gave every indication that the Lord's work is going very well in Mississippi at this time. There also was every indication that this will continue to be the case during the year to come.

For this we can all be thankful. The Lord's work is our most important consideration.



Places And People

By Anna Mae Morrison

the life eternal in Christ. The duet, "Blessed Assurance," sounded a note of triumph.

I wish Sue would write her life story. With her knack for storytelling, I know it would be interesting. She was born in south Louisiana, at LaFayette and grew up at Abbeville, one of 11 children of a devoutly Catholic family.

Sue Sims

When she was 15%, she traveled alone by bus to Lemon Grove, Calif., to join a member of her family there, to seek employment, and to attend Santa Ana Junior College. "I was a freckle-faced young Cajun!" she recalls.

Several years later, working in Memphis, she met Jim Sims of Grenada, Miss., who was in the armed services, and had been since 1943. As he was a Baptist and she a Catholic, they were married in the Methodist church at Canton, Oct. 7, 1955.

Jim, stationed in Newfoundland, asked a group in his chapel there to join him in prayers for Sue. Then he went overseas while she remained in Memphis. "I was born again Jan. 22, 1956," she said. "One morning I decided to go to Sunday School at Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis. That day I was converted." Dr. R. G. Lee baptized her.

By the fall of 1956 she was teaching Sunday School, and has done so ever since, with few breaks. "When I was growing up, the Catholic church member was forbidden to interpret the Bible for self (though this is no longer true). We never had a Bible in our home. I was hungry for the Word, and could never get enough reading it."

When Jim retired from the military in 1967 they moved to Clinton, to work in food services, in Clinton and later in Jackson.

Her house at 153 Pecan Hill is a reflection of places they lived, like New Mexico, Michigan, Italy, and Virginia. Blue delft china and pictures of windmills are from Holland; a spoon collection, Jim bought in Europe. Plants tell me Sue has a green thumb. An embroidered geranium over the couch was done by Mrs. Florence Harris, retired missionary to China, and our mutual friend.

Sue keeps herself attuned to the physical and spiritual needs of others and to the Holy Spirit's direction in her own life. As Betty Axtell said, "Because she looks after everyone so well, I like to think of her as the angel of Morrison Heights Church."

The first time I went to Sunday School at Morrison Heights, in 1972, it was Sue Sims who made me feel especially welcome. The exuberant, petite brunnette was a member of my class; Marie Roberson, former missionary to Nigeria, was the teacher. The next year Sue was my teacher—and believe me, a good one.

With her mobile face and large expressive brown eyes, her sense of humor, her talent in drama, her extensive knowledge of the Bible, she can make the illustrations come alive.

On my birthday she sent a card (I'm sure she did the same for the other class members), and included a personal note.

She made me feel like her special friend. Soon I learned that practically everybody is her special friend, and that her kind deeds make solid foundations for her friendships.

Her days have no more hours than mine, and she is a working woman. How she does so many things is beyond me! As a member of the Benevolence Committee she seeks out families who have material needs. Through WMU, she expresses her interest in missions. If a church member is sick, often it is Sue who not only visits, but offers to spend the night at the hospital at the patient's side. If there is a death, Sue is there soon to offer comfort and helpfulness.

Nursing home residents she does not forget. If anyone has a problem, Sue's ear is ready to listen. Celebrations are her forte, too. I can't recall attending a bridal shower in Clinton where Sue was not present, as guest or hostess.

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In Sunday School she has taught youths and adults; she relates well to all ages. I see her in the church foyer surrounded by teen-agers, or with her arms around an elderly person, or being embraced by someone her own age. Since she has no children of her own, everybody's children are her children.

At our silver anniversary reception in September, Sue said to W. D. and me: "Our silver anniversary would have been next month." Her husband Jim died last winter. Anyone who knew them could not help seeing how deeply they cared for each other. In the ordeal of his illness, Sue again proved to others the strength of her Christianity. Even the funeral service, which she planned in the last days of his sickness, was a witness to

and for our new President as well as the one who will be leaving office in January. This is an office that demands all of the abilities that one can muster plus the kind of outside help that can come only from the Lord.

Our Presidents, present and future, have a right to expect us to petition the Lord for that kind of help as they face the uncommon responsibilities of their office.

—Lester C. Johnson, Abbeville, La.

bile. What can we do? Could we begin by an examination of God's attitude toward the oppressed, toward the hungry, and toward his people as faithful stewards? Acknowledge God as the rightful owner of "these things" and that life consists of more than acquisition. Support our local church in its mission to provide for the hungry, the destitute, and those in need of the gospel.

When all nations are gathered before the Lord (Matt. 25:32), will our generation hear Jesus say, "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat . . ." When, Lord, did we do this? "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

W. Guy Henderson is consultant in the Department of Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion.

Thanksgiving holiday . . . Special attention will be required

One week from the date of this issue of the Baptist Record will be Thanksgiving, and this is a year when that holiday will require special attention.

This is strictly an American observance; and, in its inception, it was strictly a religious observance.

There are two concerns facing American people in considering Thanksgiving in its proper observance this year. First, it is hardly considered

a religious holiday anymore. It's more a time to visit relatives, gorge ourselves, and watch a football game. Special attention will be required in order to make the day one of thanksgiving to God, for which it was originally intended.

The second concern is that there may be many who feel there is little to be thankful about. The main cause for thanksgiving, however, is that no matter how bad a mess we make of things

for ourselves, we can always find comfort in that if we will seek the Lord's will, we can straighten them out. The thanksgiving is for the fact that the Lord is God, our Master and Redeemer. It is our business to seek a right relationship with Him. He will even help us in this.

Then while we are giving thanks for the Lord's goodness toward us, let us remember to pray for our nation, for the transition to a new administration,

lic sanction. Love, justice, and stewardship, like yesterday's pot roast, is put on a back burner. Buying, spending, and using habits must be seen in the light of growing scarcity. Life styles must be altered.

Must we remind ourselves, as we elbow our way to the thanksgiving table, that the right to food is a freedom much of the world does not possess? So far our desire for the culinary arts has outraced our love for our fellow man. Birth-control is a major problem for us and diet fads advance quickly to the best seller list. Over half the world would feel uncomfortable in a super market. "Give us this day our daily bread" and let Thy Kingdom come to all those hungry people.

We are not in the lion's den. We've moved upstairs to the king's palace, and it's difficult to enjoy the king's ta-

ble. What can we do? Could we begin by an examination of God's attitude toward the oppressed, toward the hungry, and toward his people as faithful stewards? Acknowledge God as the rightful owner of "these things" and that life consists of more than acquisition. Support our local church in its mission to provide for the hungry, the destitute, and those in need of the gospel.

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W. Guy Henderson is consultant in the Department of Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion.

Baptists and Thanksgiving

By W. Guy Henderson
Let your circumstances be your cathedral is another way of saying we should worship and praise God wherever we are. Note the circumstances of poor Daniel (Dan. 6:20). He was in big trouble with the civil and religious leaders. Only the lions and angel were there.

Meanwhile, King Darius was seemingly in ideal circumstances. Good food, plenty of clout, but unable to sleep. One was content amidst adversity, the other was miserable among his millions.

For most of us the circumstances are ideal—just a few clouds on the horizon. These clouds are so far in the distance that we seldom notice them. One cloud increasing daily in size is poverty or world hunger.

We grow weary of hearing reports and reading statistics on world hunger. Then too, there is a gnawing guilt and like Darius of old, it can cause some sleepless nights. Surely by now we have solved the hunger problem. Yet there are more hungry people in the world today than ever before. We are reminded that we cannot build a secure world upon a foundation of human misery. Assuredly, however, we keep trying.

Note: The readers of this page are due an apology. We had established the condition for ourselves that in the material that was of necessity a part of the Baptist Record prior to the election there would be no endorsement of candidates. We held to this strictly before the election, and we didn't endorse anyone afterward. One of our letter writers, however, criticized President Carter in a letter that was carried after the election.

We had not intended that this would be done. The criticism should have been deleted from the letter. The letter was sent to the printer the week before the Mississippi Baptist Convention for use the next week. During the week that it was sent we spent the first two days working on that week's issue. We had meetings of one kind or another during the remaining three days. This left little time for adequate preparation, and the criticism got through.

During the next week, when it ran in the paper, again there were meetings throughout Monday; and the convention began on Tuesday. Therefore, when the critical proof reading was being done on the page, there was, again, no time. These are not excuses—just statements of how such a flagrant violation of a principle can occur. We do indeed apologize.

Editor
The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love. — William Wordsworth

The Hepzibah Baptist Church has authorized a committee to continue the history of the church. In this continuation, we are including a section dedicated to all former pastors. We need the help of each former pastor of our church to complete this section. This section will reflect the memories and times that each pastor spent at Hepzibah.

Please send comments in written form to Hepzibah Baptist Church, Route 1, Box 170, Silver Creek, MS 39063.

History Committee

Ministry to Unlovely

Editor:

Just a note to say AMEN! to your editorial, "Who Ministers to the Unlovely?" Not only did it need saying, it required a measure of courage to say it! As extensions of Christ's body here on earth today, the churches must reach out physically to those kinds of people that Jesus ministered to. We have been "preaching to the choir" long enough!

If we are to meet our goal of witnessing to everyone by the end of the century, when are we going to put the offenders that are behind bars in our jails and prisons on our schedule? I have a small jail ministry here on the Coast that could be much, much

larger. Jesus used the passage of Luke 4:18 and 19 to set out the purpose of and explain His ministry. Should we do any less?

If we are to continue His work, we at least should give more than lip service to the very crux of His own ministry.

I also feel uncomfortable and also a growing sense of urgency that we must reach out to these people.

Thank you for speaking out.

Sid Taylor
Ocean Springs

The ABSCAM Situation

Editor:

Last night, I viewed the films shown on TV of the ABSCAM situation where undercover or disguised government agents set out to trick, tempt, and lead to the downfall of unsuspecting, duly elected public officials.

But I am alarmed, greatly alarmed and disturbed. Our law-enforcing agencies have now degenerated into instruments of deceit and destruction for unsuspecting victims.

Persons sworn to uphold and enforce our laws and investigate those cases suspected of violations have now become the means by which innocent people can be victimized and destroyed at the capricious whims of unidentified, cowardly, "law-enforcing" officials.

Who can be free from this type of tyranny, this cruel use of power?

Take a look in Bible history and see how God views such activities and the corresponding consequences. In the Old Testament is the story of Naaman found in Esther 3:1-7:10. Also, the story of Ahab and Jezebel in their infamous acquisition of Naboth's vineyard, I Kings 21:1-24. The New Testament presents the views of our Savior in Matthew 18:1-7: "Woe to the man by whom temptations to sin come."

Who can say where this approach and use of government offices and agents will end? This ABSCAM approach needs to be stamped out NOW! before it spreads like unquenchable fire.

Name withheld
by request

A Mighty Force

Editor:

Resolutions Touch Textbooks, Alcohol, Church and State

David Pratt presented the report of the Resolutions Committee on Wednesday afternoon during the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Seven resolutions were introduced.

Joe Tuten presented Resolution No. 1. The resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON THE CURRICULUM MATERIAL FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

WHEREAS, we believe that all truth is in God and

WHEREAS, the worship and adoration of God essentially includes a search for and devotion to truth in all areas of human existence, and

WHEREAS, many curriculum materials and books used in our public schools in Mississippi strongly and consistently advocate a singular and closed interpretation of origins and omit and are silent on the Biblical revelation of Divine purpose and activity in our origins, and

WHEREAS, the interpretation of our origins is inexorably related to and crucial to the interpretation and understanding of our being and destiny, both for individuals and society,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that we assembled at this 1980 annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention express our concern over this continued promulgation through the public schools of a closed interpretation of origins, and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that we request the Christian Action Commission to endeavor to confer with representatives of the major publishing companies and work toward a greater openness in the interpretation of origins as taught through our public schools.

James Byrd, Blue Mountain, presented Resolution No. 2. The resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON ALCOHOL

WHEREAS, alcohol continues to be the No. 1 drug abuse by all segments of society, and whereas, teenagers are increasingly turning to alcohol as their No. 1 drug, resulting in an increase of alcoholism before age thirty, and

WHEREAS, the alcoholic beverage vested interests constantly pressure for increased consumption, disregarding the havoc in health, destruction of human life and property and the economic cost of at least four dollars for every dollar derived in tax revenue;

now, therefore, be it resolved, that we, the members of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, do hereby adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION CONCERNING CHURCH & STATE

WHEREAS, there are continued tensions in church/state relations and the increasing burden of government regulations that threaten to interfere with the free exercise of the mission and ministry of our churches and institutions, and

WHEREAS, we are concerned about the continued encroachment by bureaucratic guidelines that moves us into excessive entanglement with government, such as the threat of lifting tax exemption from churches, institutions, and agencies, the double taxation on certain church supplies by the use tax in our state, and the taxation of denominational literature, and

WHEREAS, religious liberty is a biblical concept solidly grounded in the sovereignty of God and the freedom of man, and

WHEREAS, religious liberty can be guaranteed best with both church and state being free from the control of the other;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(1) That we reaffirm our convictions about Church/State separation and religious liberty and that we encourage our institutions as well as our churches to continue to uphold these time-honored principles with a consistency that will not negate our witness;

(2) That we encourage the members of Baptist churches of the Convention to be responsive through their elected representatives to any issues that would erode our freedoms and further entangle us with government control or interference; and

(3) That in order to respond promptly and aggressively, we be alert to statements made through The Baptist Record and other media by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the Christian Action Commission, and other responsible sources of information.

David Pratt presented Resolution No. 4 and it was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN EARNED INCOME ACT

WHEREAS, The Foreign Earned Income Act of 1978, which eliminated

WHEREAS, in forty-seven of the fifty states the presumptive level of intoxication is .10% blood alcohol content, and in two of the three remaining states the presumptive level of intoxication is .08% blood alcohol content, while Mississippi conspicuously stands alone in that the presumptive level of intoxication is .15% blood alcohol content;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(1) That once again we reaffirm our position as opposing any use of alcohol as a beverage,

(2) That we oppose the advertising of any kind of alcoholic beverage on television or radio, in newspapers, or by any media,

(3) That we continue to educate our youth and others to the harmful effects of alcohol and other drug abuse.

(4) That we encourage our messengers and church members to contact their state legislators and urge that the law be changed to reduce the blood alcohol content to .10% instead of the present .15% for the purpose of declaring one to be legally intoxicated.

Bob Hutchinson, First, Florence, presented Resolution No. 3. The resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION CONCERNING CHURCH & STATE

WHEREAS, there are continued tensions in church/state relations and the increasing burden of government regulations that threaten to interfere with the free exercise of the mission and ministry of our churches and institutions, and

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(1) That we reaffirm our convictions about Church/State separation and religious liberty and that we encourage our institutions as well as our churches to continue to uphold these time-honored principles with a consistency that will not negate our witness;

(2) That we encourage the members of Baptist churches of the Convention to be responsive through their elected representatives to any issues that would erode our freedoms and further entangle us with government control or interference; and

(3) That in order to respond promptly and aggressively, we be alert to statements made through The Baptist Record and other media by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, the Christian Action Commission, and other responsible sources of information.

David Pratt presented Resolution No. 4 and it was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN EARNED INCOME ACT

WHEREAS, The Foreign Earned Income Act of 1978, which eliminated

the \$20,000 exclusion from taxable income for United States citizens residing overseas places a new and significant tax burden on overseas employees of charitable and religious organizations ministering in foreign countries, and

WHEREAS, because of that, significant portions of the tithes and offerings of Baptist people given for the vital task of spreading the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world as well as for relief, healing, agriculture, and community development would be diverted to assist missionaries in payment of taxes, and

WHEREAS, December 15, 1980, is the date of the final extension for payment of \$1 million in taxes for 1979, and at least another \$1 million in taxes will be payable in each subsequent year, and

WHEREAS, the Foreign Mission Board already assists its missionaries in the payment of taxes to governments in lands where they serve in excess of \$1 million annually, so that the loss of the overseas exemption represents double taxation.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Mississippi Baptist Convention at its 1980 annual meeting in Jackson, Mississippi, goes on record as urging Congress to adopt an amendment to the tax laws of the United States that would restore the \$20,000 tax exemption to employees of charitable and religious organizations working overseas.

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James Byrd presented Resolution No. 5 and it was adopted.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR MRS. NANNIE PITTS MCLEMORE ON BEHALF OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST HISTORICAL COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nannie Pitts McLemore served the Historical Commission for more than three years as executive secretary; and

WHEREAS, following an accident on Sunday, January 20, she died Thursday, January 24, 1980; and

WHEREAS, she contributed much to the administration of her husband, Richard Aubrey McLemore, while he served Mississippi Baptists as president of Mississippi College; and

WHEREAS, while she blessed the entire state with the Mississippi history textbooks which she co-authored with her husband, she made a lasting contribution to Baptists in the indexing of the volume *A History of Mississippi Baptists* by her husband, and *The History of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Mississippi* which they wrote together; and

WHEREAS, she brought to completion two volumes which she and her husband had begun together before his death, *The Baptist Record: A History, and The History of Mississippi College*; and

WHEREAS, she served the commission without any monetary compensation for her work, yet she came every working day to the office to continue her research and writing, to assist visitors, and to encourage commission members and staff;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. that Mississippi Baptists in convention assembled express our appreciation of her and her labors;

2. that a memorial page with her photograph be included in the Minutes of this convention; and

3. that those who follow us may recognize her worth this resolution be recorded in the Minutes.

Roy McHenry, Madison, presented Resolution No. 6 and it was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON DR. JOHN F. CARTER

WHEREAS, Mississippi Baptists have bid farewell to one of our most dedicated and learned Bible scholars through the death of Dr. John F. Carter, and his faithful and supportive wife, Mattie Carter;

WHEREAS, they faithfully served our Lord for most of his ninety-two years as pastor, teacher, college administrator, and author, and

WHEREAS, his spirit lives on here in the lives and ministries of the hundreds he taught.

BE IT RESOLVED that this convention express its gratitude by means of this resolution for the decades of faithful service they rendered to its churches and to this convention through his unwavering faith and untiring labor at Clarke College.

BE IT RESOLVED that a memorial page with his picture be included in the Minutes of this convention, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to his family.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

WHEREAS, Mississippi Baptists meeting in their annual session in Jackson, November 11-13, 1980, have experienced the gracious hospitality of the First Baptist Church of Jackson and the City of Jackson, and

WHEREAS, the messengers of this annual convention have been the beneficiaries of the diligent labors of our convention officers, committees, and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board staff,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that we express our sincere appreciation to the First Baptist Church of Jackson for the hospitality of their facilities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT WE EXPRESS to the officials and citizens of the city of Jackson our thanks for the hospitality of their city, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we express our gratitude to the news media for the coverage given during the convention sessions, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we express our heartfelt thanks to our convention officers, committees, and Executive Secretary-Treasurer and his staff for their careful preparation for this annual meeting and commendable service during these sessions.

Gary Johnson, Holly Bluff, presented Resolution No. 7 and it was adopted.

RESOLUTION ON DR. JOHN F. CARTER

WHEREAS, Mississippi Baptists have bid farewell to one of our most dedicated and learned Bible scholars through the death of Dr. John F. Carter, and his faithful and supportive wife, Mattie Carter;

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WHEREAS, his spirit lives on here in the lives and ministries of the hundreds he taught.

BE IT RESOLVED that this convention express its gratitude by means of this resolution for the decades of faithful service they rendered to its churches and to this convention through his unwavering faith and untiring labor at Clarke College.

BE IT RESOLVED that a memorial page with his picture be included in the Minutes of this convention, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to his family.

Centreville Dedicates

Sanctuary

Centreville Church dedicated its newly remodeled and refurbished sanctuary Nov. 2 at the 11 a.m. service.

The church was filled to capacity. Many former members and some former pastors were present. Lunch was served after the morning service. Open house was held from 3 to 5.

There were 211 in Sunday School, the highest attendance in many years, according to Jimmy Simeon, pastor.

New York (EP) — U. S. Lutheran churches have given about \$275,000 to help cover resettlement costs of Cuban and Haitian refugees. The funds, in response to a request on behalf of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service headquartered here, are to be channeled by the agency into work with refugees in resettlement camps.

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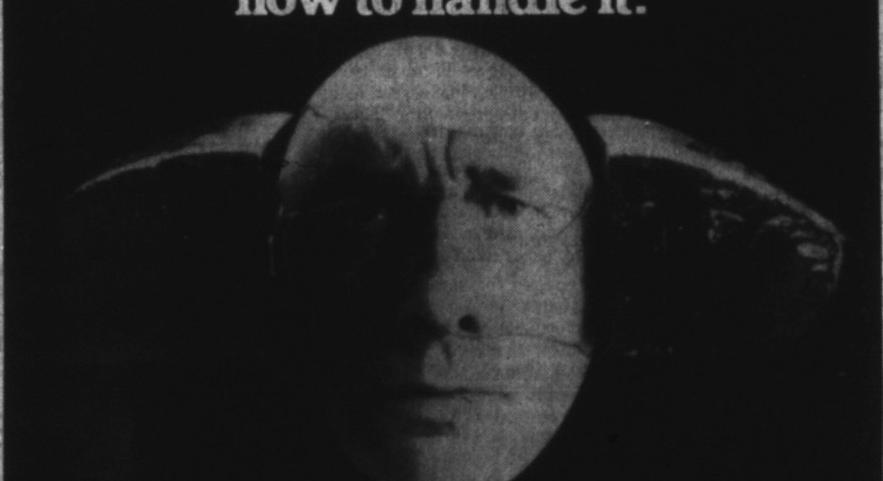
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First For The Record



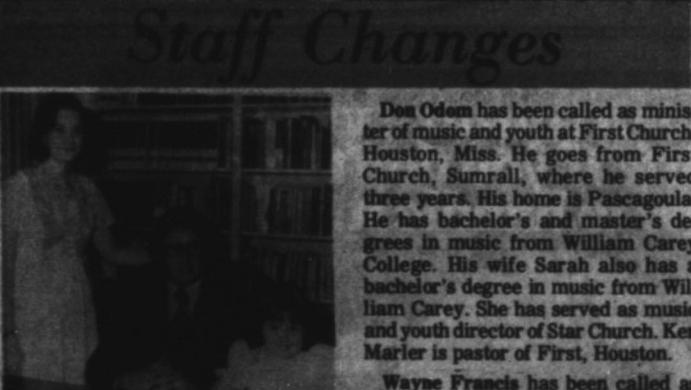
In the Bible Searchers Memory Plan, 1980, at First, West Point, Grade Six had six members who attained the Level of Excellence by learning 40 or more of the weekly memory verses, the divisions and books of the Bible, and four specified Scripture passages.

Pictured are four of the six: Michelle Simmons, Stephanie Robinson, Kelly Elizabeth Clark, and Katherine Doughty Lyon. Not pictured: Karen Lynn Hall and Kathy Louise Hall. Their teachers are Mrs. Charles Rodgers and Mrs. Nan Stafford.

Brian Hyde and Jimmy Whittington attained the Level of Advancement by learning at least 25 weekly memory verses, plus divisions and books of the Bible. Their teachers are John Shackelford and B. Z. Dyer. Many others received the Level of Achievement. Director of Grade 6 is Mrs. Allie S. Vance. David Hall is pastor.



"LOVE GOD, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR" was the theme for the RA, GA, and Acteen recognition service at HOLLY CHURCH, CORINTH. Leigh Ann Smith, third row center, Acteen, was crowned Queen and received a charm bracelet. Steven Dalton and Allen Spencer, second row left; RAs, got pins for Lad 3 Achievement. GAs who earned certificates and badges were April Watkins, and Jenny Emerson, front row, Angie Johnson and Connie Vied, second row, and Jill Davis and Carol Ann Dalton, third row. Leaders are Mrs. Dan Emerson, Mr. and Mrs. Tim Tyson. Dan Emerson is pastor.



The Burts

Michael W. Burt, minister of music and television director of West Laurel Church, Laurel, has resigned to accept the position as minister of music at the Summer Grove Church, Shreveport, La.

Burt received his education, both on bachelor's and master's levels from the University of Southern Mississippi.

He is married to Jennifer King of Brookhaven, and they have one daughter, Amy, 7.

C. J. Townsend, new pastor at Gooden Lake Church, Humphreys County, was formerly pastor of Bethel Church, Fayette, Ala.

Steve Chestain has accepted the call of Goodyear Church, Picayune, to serve as minister of music. He is a student at New Orleans Seminary, and has served other churches in Mississippi. He and his wife Carol served

Don Odom has been called as minister of music and youth at First Church, Houston, Miss. He goes from First Church, Sumrall, where he served three years. His home is Pascagoula. He has bachelor's and master's degrees in music from William Carey College. His wife Sarah also has a bachelor's degree in music from William Carey. She has served as music and youth director of Star Church. Ken Marler is pastor of First, Houston.

Wayne Francis has been called as minister of music and youth director of Priceville Church in Tupelo. He is a 1979 graduate of Mississippi State, where he received a degree in music. Robert L. Daniel is the Priceville pastor.

Richard Cullum has been called as minister of education at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. He and his wife Sherry and son Jason will move there Dec. 1 from First Church, Greenwood, where he is minister of education and outreach.

Cullum, a Jackson native, has degrees from Mississippi State University (in nuclear engineering) and from New Orleans Seminary (MRE). He formerly worked 6½ years at Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation in Pascagoula as a nuclear engineer and at Ingalls Avenue Church, Pascagoula, as minister of education.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, W. T. Hodge of Asheville, N.C. and a daughter, Alma (Mrs. John) Rose of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Steve Chestain has accepted the call of Goodyear Church, Picayune, to serve as minister of music. He is a student at New Orleans Seminary, and has served other churches in Mississippi. He and his wife Carol served



ANGELA RASBERRY, left, and JOEY RASBERRY have received perfect attendance pins for Sunday School, she for 15 years and he for 14 years. They are the children of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Rasberry and are members of the Banner Church in Calhoun County. Angela and Joey are both members of the Bruce High School Band, and Angela is church pianist at Banner. The pins were presented by the pastor, John E. Gray, Jr., right.

Providence Will Mark 150th Year

Sunday, Nov. 23, Providence Church, Grenada, will celebrate 150 years of existence.

The day's activities will begin with Sunday School at 9:45 followed by the regular morning service. A covered-dish Harvest Dinner will be served at noon with a special program of celebration planned for 2 p.m.

A History Committee composed of Mrs. Katherine Harbin, Mrs. Irene Floyd, and Mrs. Jenner Rose Carpenter will present highlights of the church's history, and former pastors will be given a time to speak. Congregational singing and special music are also planned. No night service will be held.

Revival Dates

Arlington Church, laymen's revival: Nov. 23-26; Sunday worship at 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds and evening worship at 7; weekday at 7 p.m., Mon.-Wed.; preaching, Griffin Sylvester, J. V. Ulmer, Charles Herring, Freddie Byrd, and Mike Easterling; leading in music, Voncile Hillman and Winford Herring; Richard E. Colwell, pastor.

Calvary, Newton: Nov. 21-23; J. Clark Hensley, director, Christian Action Commission, preaching; family life revival. Neil Adams, in charge of music; Friday evening at 7; Saturday noon and Saturday evening at 7, Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Henry Adams, pastor.

One must be good to do good, and do good to be good.

British Preacher To Lead Meet At First, Lexington

Roy Hession, evangelist from England, will be at First Church, Lexington, Wayne Barber, pastor, Nov. 23-26 to lead a "Deeper in Christ Conference." Services will begin each day at 12 noon and 7 p.m.

Hession has been engaged for 44 years in itinerant evangelistic and Bible teaching work, in Great Britain, and many other countries, including the United States.

At 18 he was brought to Christ through an interdenominational organization then worked for a time in a London bank before being called by God to full-time service.

In the midst of his evangelistic work, the East African revival came to England through returning missionaries and certain African leaders, and changed the course of his ministry.

He has written eight books, the first being THE CALVARY ROAD, which has sold 1,000,000 copies in English and has been translated into 50 languages.

Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of faith is to see what we believe. — Augustine

Devotional

No Long Faces In Heaven "Rejoice In The Lord"

By Robert J. Sanderson, Pastor, Evergreen (Wayne)

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Christianity is a joyful experience. Therefore, every Christian should be a rejoicing Christian.

However, there are many Christians who have not yet learned to be happy in the Lord. There are several kinds of Christians in today's church.

1. There are the "give up" Christians. These are people who feel that being a Christian is giving up certain things or activities. They talk about what they have given up in order to serve Christ. Often Matthew 16:24 is quoted as a proof text to show that we must give up things to please the Lord.

2. Then we have the "sober" Christian. This quality is often reflected in clothing styles and conversation. I once thought that I was pleasing the Lord if I dressed in ultraconservative clothes and spoke in "thee's" and "thou's." Then one day I heard Dr. J. D. Grey use wit and humor to drive home the points of his sermon. I was shocked but later made to realize how impractical my "thee's" and "thou's" were.

Also, I saw a rainbow which the Lord painted across the sky. There was nothing ultraconservative about it. Blues, greens, pinks and yellows in the brightest of colors stood before me in the Lord's work of art. Suddenly I saw God in a new light. He is not drab and dull, but one who loves the bright and beautiful. Quietly and gently the Spirit showed me that a Christian did not have to be straight-laced and sober, with never a smile.

3. Real Christianity is a joyful experience. Some of the joys of Christians are forgiveness and the removal of guilt. There is the joy of service and the joy of reward. On and on one could go in naming the joys of the Christian life. Let us heed Paul's words, "Rejoice in the Lord alway." If an unbelieving world can have "A coke and a smile," surely we Christians who have Christ can smile.

Names In The News



G. J. Mitchell and Sam McMurray were ordained as deacons by First Church, Pascagoula, on Oct. 26.



Carmel Church, Monticello, ordained four deacons, Oct. 12. Those ordained were Willie Dunn, Garland Neal, Lawrence Russell, and Mike Wilson.

The report of the presbytery was given by L. W. Johns, chairman of deacons. Ray Cowart brought the charge to the deacons, with an ordination message delivered by Robert L. Dunn, pastor. A retired deacon, Guy Mitchell, led in the ordination prayer and presented the men with their certificates.



Sarah Willey Young completed 20 years of perfect Sunday School attendance on Sept. 28. She is an Adult Sunday School teacher and church pianist at New Hope Church (Leake Association) where her husband, Jimmy, is pastor.

Rod Rochester resigned June 1 from Beulah Church, Decatur, Miss. as pastor, in order to enter into full-time evangelistic work. Before serving at Beulah he was pastor of Bethel Church, Jones, Ala., for three years, during which time he attended New Orleans Seminary. Recently he led in a revival at Beatrice Church, Decatur, Marvin LuCroy, pastor. Rochester now lives with his wife Betty and their two children, Darrin and Sherri, at 424 Union Street, Selma, Ala. 36701.

Charles D. Phillips, Ed.D., President of the American Protestant Hospital Association and executive director of the College of Chaplains, Schaumburg, Ill., has been included in

the 41st Edition of Who's Who in America. Phillips and his wife, the former Shirley Cooper of Jackson, reside at 467 Providence Road, Palatine, Ill. 60067. He is a native of Drew, MS., and has degrees from Mississippi College, Southern Seminary, and New Orleans Seminary.

Phillips formerly served pastorates in Mississippi and Kentucky, and as chaplain at Baptist Hospital, New Orleans.

New Sight Will Dedicate Plant

New Sight Church, Lincoln County, will dedicate its new sanctuary and education building on Sunday, Nov. 23.

Clarence Cutrell, former consultant with the Stewardship department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, now retired, will speak at the 11 a.m. service.

A brief dedication service will be held at 2:30 p.m. A reception and open house will follow. Ed Wright is the pastor.



Life and Work Lesson Persons Before Traditions

By Bobby Perry, Pastor,
First, Moss Point
Focal Passage: Luke 6:1-11

The focus of Luke 6:1-11 was upon two separate sabbath days. The central point of contention was tradition versus "people needs." The issue was raised by an antagonistic group of Pharisees. Their opposition to Jesus was on the increase, and they looked for opportunities to entrap him.

The issue that created the conflict was the rightful use of the sabbath. Jesus took the importance of the day seriously and never insinuated any deliberate scorn for the day as such. "As his custom was" (Luke 4:16) he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day on a regular basis. He had been taught this from childhood, and continued the practice. Until that is, the synagogue was closed to him. Jesus did not argue or propose that the sabbath should be desecrated by relaxing rules and regulations. Instead, he argued for its divine purpose to be fulfilled. Jesus' sole purpose was to show that God's love reaches beyond tradition to needs.

The opponents of Jesus had missed the whole divine purpose and intent for the day. Performing deeds of mercy were an obligation, a fulfillment of God's purpose. At the same time, "the

corn was in itself no crime.

One of the merciful laws of the Old Testament laid it down that anyone passing through a corn field was free to pluck the corn so long as he did not put a sickle into it (Deut. 23:25). On any other day there would have been no problem; but this was the sabbath. Four of the forbidden kinds of work were reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food; and technically the disciples had broken every one of them. By plucking the corn they were guilty of reaping; by rubbing it in their hands, of threshing; by flinging away the husks, of winnowing; the very fact that they ate it showed that they had prepared food on the sabbath. To us the whole thing seems fantastic; but we must remember that to a strict Pharisee this was a deadly sin. One of the little rules and regulations had been broken, and this to them was a matter of life and death.

Since only Judaism had the sabbath, it was the one unique element in their faith. For this reason you can understand why the Jews were especially sensitive and zealous concerning it. Thus the rabbis had devised over fifteen hundred rules on conduct as to what one might or might not do on that day.

In this passage there is one great challenge. Learn about the Sabbath.

At this point the opposition to Jesus was quite open. While Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the sabbath day, the scribes and Pharisees were there with the set purpose of watching him so that, if he healed, they could charge him with breaking the sabbath.

In this incident of healing the man's withered hand Jesus quite openly broke the law. To heal was to work, and work was prohibited on the sabbath day. True, if there were any danger to life, steps might be taken to help a sufferer. For instance, it was always legal to treat diseases of the eye or throat. But this man was in no danger of his life; he could have waited until the next day without peril. But Jesus put forth the principle that, whatever the rules and regulations may say, it's always right to do a good thing on the sabbath day. Jesus asked the piercing questions, "Is it lawful to save life or to destroy it on the sabbath?" (verse 9). That must have struck home, for while he was seeking to help the life of the man, they were doing all they could to destroy him. It was Jesus who was seeking to save and they were seeking to destroy (Barclay).

In the grain fields the Pharisees had challenged Jesus about the Sabbath.